Mogadishu's dust

The streets were alive with death, the city they once called home reduced to a battle zone.

LUCAS DURAND

An Ovi Magazine Books Publication
© 2026 Ovi Project Publication - All material is copyright of the Ovi magazine & the writer

Ovi books are available in Ovi magazine pages and they are for free.
If somebody tries to sell you an Ovi book please contact us immediately.

For details, contact: ovimagazine@yahoo.com

No part of this publication may be reproduced, printed or digital,
altered or selectively extracted by any means
(electronic, mechanical, print,, recording or otherwise)
without the prior written permission of the author or the publisher of this book.

Lucas Durand

Mogadishu's dust

An Ovi Magazine Books Publication
©2026 Ovi Project Publication - All material is copyright of the Ovi magazine & the writer

Mogadishu had fallen silent for only a moment. A brief, unnatural calm in the air, before the whole city erupted again. The sun had set, but the night was no quieter. Instead, it was alive with the shriek of mortar shells and the sharp staccato of gunfire. Every corner of the city seemed to pulse with tension, the smell of smoke and burning debris thick in the air.

"Move, move!"

The order cut through the darkness like a knife. Hassan, barely sixteen, his young face streaked with dirt, clenched his teeth. His heart pounded in his chest, a deafening rhythm that drowned out everything else. The heat was unbearable, the air

thick with the stench of blood, oil, and gunpowder. He wiped the sweat from his eyes as he crouched behind a burnt-out car with the rest of the rebels. The streets were alive with death, the city they once called home reduced to a battle zone.

There was no room for hesitation.

"Get down!" Omar hissed, a man much older than Hassan, his hands shaking as he adjusted his rifle. Omar's eyes were sharp, but even he could feel the pressure mounting. Fear crept into every one of their movements.

Hassan peered through the cracked windshield of the car. The streets ahead were cloaked in shadows, but every so often, the flash of muzzle fire lit up the night. The air was thick with the roar of explosions, sending tremors through the ground.

He could hear the distant rumble of engines, military vehicles. Coming closer.

"They're pushing from the west," Omar whispered, his voice grim. *"They're going to try and trap us."*

A hiss of static followed by a crackling voice came through the radio in Hassan's hand.

"All units, fall back. Hold the line at sector eight. We're moving in. Over."

Hassan clenched his jaw. There was no falling back. Not now. They'd been forced to retreat time and time again, but this time, it was different. This time, there was no safety, no shelter. Just the endless fight for survival.

Suddenly, a high-pitched whine filled the air, too close. Hassan barely had time to react before the grenade landed with a deafening *thud* nearby. The shockwave hit him first, a blast of force that made his ears ring and his vision blur. He hit the ground, covering his head with his arms, the world spinning around him.

The grenade exploded with a sickening roar, sending a wall of heat and debris into the air. Hassan's teeth rattled, his body convulsing with the impact. The explosion tore into the street, setting nearby buildings ablaze. The remnants of the car they were hiding behind were sent flying into the air, scattering across the street.

For a second, Hassan thought it was the end. He gasped for air, blinking the stars from his vision, the taste of smoke thick in his mouth. But the shock was

only temporary, and his body reacted instinctively. His fingers wrapped around the grip of his AK-47, his knuckles white.

The world around him blurred in a haze of fear and adrenaline.

"Hassan!" Omar's voice was tight with urgency. *"Get up! They're coming!"*

The words barely registered in Hassan's mind. He could hear the sound of boots thundering against the ground, shouting voices coming closer. He took a breath, wiped the blood from his lip, and scrambled to his feet.

A low growl reverberated in the distance, an armored vehicle. Hassan's stomach clenched. They had to move. No more waiting. No more hiding.

He turned to Omar, his voice barely audible over the distant rumble of the engines.

"We can't hold them off much longer."

Omar's eyes narrowed, his face a mask of determination, though the fear flickered in his gaze. *"We don't have a choice, Hassan. We fight or we die."*

Before Hassan could respond, a burst of gunfire cracked through the air, and the street erupted once more. Bullets whizzed past them, ricocheting off the walls and ground. Hassan instinctively dropped to his knees, his hand pulling the trigger, sending a spray of rounds into the chaos. The sound of gunfire was deafening, a cacophony of death and desperation.

"On your feet!" Omar shouted. *"We've got to go, now!"*

The two of them sprinted forward, Hassan's legs burning with the effort, his breath coming in ragged gasps. The world around him was a blur, flashes of light, the deep thud of distant explosions, the crackling of gunfire. A heavy, metallic thud echoed in his chest.

"Left, now!" Omar barked.

Hassan veered left, ducking into an alleyway just as another volley of bullets tore through the air behind them. His heart raced faster as they ran, every step taking him closer to an uncertain fate. There was no safe place left in the city. Only ruins.

Ahead, the sound of boots grew louder. Hassan

risked a glance back over his shoulder, and his blood ran cold. A military truck, its engine roaring, barreled down the street toward them, the headlights cutting through the dark like twin knives.

"*Keep running!*" Omar's voice was strained.

The truck's headlights swept across the alley, illuminating the walls on either side, and for a split second, Hassan saw the shadowy figures of enemy soldiers, their rifles raised.

"*Move!*" Omar's voice rang out, and the two of them darted around a corner, hearts pounding in their chests.

They ran for what felt like an eternity, the sounds of battle fading into the distance. But Hassan knew it wasn't over. Not yet. The city was on fire, and there was no place to hide.

"*We're not out of this yet,*" Omar said, his voice grim as they crouched behind the wreckage of a collapsed building.

Hassan nodded, sweat dripping down his face, his hand still gripping his rifle. "*Where's the rest of our group?*"

Omar's eyes flickered with a mix of sadness and determination. "*They're gone. We're all that's left.*"

Hassan felt a cold knot form in his stomach, but there was no time for grief. There was only one thing left to do.

"*We fight,*" he whispered. "*We fight until the end.*"

And in that moment, as the city burned around them, Hassan understood the truth. There was no way out. There never had been. The only choice was to keep moving. Keep fighting.

For survival.

For honor.

For the ghosts of the fallen.

Chapter 1
Blood and smoke

The city of Mogadishu was a furnace of destruction, its streets a battleground, every corner an invitation to death. Hassan's heart raced as he crouched low, his hands tight on the grip of his AK-47, the sweat stinging his eyes. The world around him was a blur of gunfire and screams. Smoke from burning buildings thickened the air, choking every breath.

For a moment, the chaos seemed to subside, and the distant rumble of artillery became a dull hum. But Hassan knew better. It was only the calm before the storm.

"Hassan!"

Omar's voice snapped him out of his daze. The older man's face, weathered with exhaustion, poked

up from behind a pile of rubble. His rifle was aimed down the narrow alley in front of them, his eyes scanning for movement.

"*They're coming,*" Omar said, his voice steady but edged with urgency. "*We need to move... now.*"

Hassan glanced down the street, seeing nothing but shadows and the flicker of distant muzzle flashes. He swallowed hard, the taste of dust in his mouth, his heart pounding in his chest. He knew what moving meant: exposure. They would have to cross open ground, where every step could be their last.

But there was no choice. The government forces were pushing hard, and the rebel group had been ordered to hold their position at all costs.

"Let's go," Hassan said, his voice a strained whisper.

They darted out from their cover, sprinting across the blood-splattered street. The world exploded in a deafening barrage of gunfire, bullets ricocheting off the walls and concrete. Hassan's breath hitched as the deafening cracks of automatic weapons filled the air, his feet pounding against the broken pavement.

"*Keep moving!*" Omar shouted, his voice cutting through the noise. He was ahead of Hassan now,

leading the way, his body low to the ground as he zigzagged between the crumbling buildings. Hassan pushed himself harder, the adrenaline coursing through his veins, every muscle screaming for relief but he knew there was none to be found.

The air was thick with the stench of burning fuel, the acrid smoke filling his lungs with each breath. He could hear the screams of the wounded and the cries of fallen comrades, someone was calling for help, but the sounds faded quickly, lost in the noise of war.

Suddenly, a sharp crack pierced the air. Omar's body jerked, then collapsed to the ground with a grunt of pain.

"Omar!"

Hassan didn't think, he just reacted. His legs pumped furiously, propelling him forward, his rifle forgotten in his hands. He reached Omar, kneeling beside him, his fingers trembling as he tried to assess the damage. Blood was already pooling around Omar's chest, a wide, dark stain that spread across his tattered shirt.

Omar's eyes were clouded with pain, but they locked onto Hassan's. He was trying to speak, but the

words were a struggle.

"*You need to go,*" Omar rasped, his voice barely a whisper, a cough racking his body. His eyes flickered, but he forced himself to focus on Hassan. "*Tell them... tell them the fight isn't over... that we never... gave up.*"

Hassan swallowed, his throat tight with emotion. He wanted to scream, to shout, to hold on to the only friend he had left. But the battlefield didn't care about their personal losses. It didn't care about Omar's final words or his plea for survival. It just kept moving, kept killing, and Hassan knew his time was running out.

"*I won't forget,*" Hassan whispered, his voice breaking as he looked into his friend's eyes one last time.

Omar's grip loosened on Hassan's arm, his breathing shallow, his life slipping away. Hassan could do nothing but watch as the life drained from him. He reached out, his fingers brushing against Omar's, but there was no response. Just the stillness of death.

With one last look at his fallen comrade, Hassan gritted his teeth and stood. The street around him was a blur of smoke and gunfire, but something in him hardened, like steel forging in the fire. He would

survive. He would make it out of this hellhole, no matter the cost.

"I'm sorry, Omar," he muttered under his breath.

Without another word, Hassan turned and sprinted back into the chaos, the sounds of battle roaring around him. There was no time for mourning, no time to look back. The war wasn't over, not yet. And Hassan had a promise to keep. He would fight, *for Omar, for them all.*

* * * * * * * * * *

Hassan's legs burned as he ran, his heart hammering in his chest. The city was a maze of alleyways, every one of them teeming with danger. The air was thick with the sound of combat, each step a reminder of the fine line between life and death.

"Hassan!"

He spun at the sound of his name, fingers tightening on the rifle as he brought it up instinctively. It was Ahmed, another fighter from their group. His face was streaked with dirt, his eyes wide with panic.

"They're coming for us!" Ahmed shouted. *"We have to move, now!"*

Hassan didn't hesitate. He darted toward the alley where Ahmed was crouched, feeling the tension in the air tighten around them. They didn't have much time. The government forces were closing in, and they had nowhere to go but deeper into the city, toward the heart of the battle.

"*Where's the rest of the group?*" Hassan asked, his voice tight as they crouched behind a pile of concrete rubble.

"*They're scattered. Some are still fighting... others are retreating,*" Ahmed said, his voice grim. "*But we can't stay here much longer. The enemy's already in the next block.*"

Hassan nodded, scanning the area. The streets were eerily quiet for a moment, the tension thick in the air. Then, the unmistakable sound of boots hitting the pavement broke the silence. Soldiers. They were coming.

"*We need to go,*" Hassan said, his voice urgent. He pushed himself up, dragging Ahmed along as they bolted down the alley, keeping low and moving fast.

The sound of gunfire erupted again, deafening in the close confines of the city. Hassan's head whipped

around at the sound of a burst of automatic fire, closer now, too close. The air seemed to tremble with the violence surrounding them. Hassan's senses sharpened, his grip tightening on the rifle as he moved. His eyes flicked to the left, spotting a small doorway that led into a nearby building.

"In there!" Hassan shouted, pulling Ahmed toward it.

They dove through the doorway, slamming it shut behind them just as the first bullets slammed into the brick wall. They scrambled to their feet, finding themselves in a dark, narrow hallway that smelled of mildew and decay. The sound of boots thudded outside, then a voice, loud and harsh, in Somali, giving orders to move in.

Hassan's breath came in short, sharp gasps as he pressed his back to the wall. He could hear the soldiers outside now, their voices low and urgent, their steps dragging closer. His mind raced, calculating their options, but there were none. They were trapped.

"*What do we do?*" Ahmed asked, his voice trembling.

Hassan didn't answer immediately. He couldn't. The air was thick with the weight of inevitability. He knew what he had to do, what they both had to do if they wanted to survive.

"Stay quiet," Hassan whispered. *"And pray they don't find us."*

* * * * * * * * * *

The minutes stretched into hours. The soldiers were searching the building, their voices echoing down the narrow hallways, each step like a ticking clock. Hassan and Ahmed remained motionless, barely breathing, their eyes scanning the shadows for any sign of movement.

Outside, the gunfire continued, the city around them a furnace of destruction. The world was falling apart.

But there was still hope. There had to be. Hassan wasn't ready to die.

The sound of boots echoed closer.

"Shh…"

Hassan squeezed his eyes shut, trying to push away

the fear. The soldiers were right outside now, their footsteps so close he could hear their labored breathing. But they hadn't found them yet. Not yet.

The door behind them creaked open slowly.

"*What the hell is this?*" The soldier's voice cut through the air like a knife.

Hassan's heart stopped.

Chapter 2
The relentless tide

The oppressive heat of the morning had long given way to the stifling air of the evening. The city of Mogadishu, now reduced to a half-ruin of collapsed buildings and charred wreckage, seemed to pulse with a rhythm of its own, one dictated by violence. Every corner held its secrets, every alley its dangers.

Hassan's legs were heavy, weighed down by exhaustion and the sharp, persistent pain from his side, where a bullet had left its mark. Blood had soaked through his shirt, but the adrenaline kept him moving. There was no time to rest. There was no time for anything but survival.

"*We move tonight.*"

The words echoed in Hassan's mind. They weren't just a command; they were a lifeline. Musa, the leader of this new ragtag group of rebels, had made it clear. The government forces were tightening their grip on the city, pushing the rebel forces into ever-smaller pockets. The walls were closing in, and Musa knew it was now or never.

Hassan glanced around at the men gathered in the darkened ruins, their faces grim, some of them hardly more than boys. They looked to Musa, their unspoken trust in him clear. Musa, older than the others, his face worn and scarred by too many battles, had that unshakeable air of authority. He had seen too many men, too many friends, fall in this senseless war. But in his eyes, there was still a fire. It was the kind of fire that had kept him alive this long.

"*This is our chance,*" Musa said, his voice rough but sharp, cutting through the tension in the air. "*We break through their lines tonight. We leave the city, and we live to fight another day.*"

Hassan's pulse quickened. Musa's plan was reckless, there was no doubt about that, but it was the only option. The government forces were too strong, too numerous. The insurgents, scattered and broken, had

no hope of holding on much longer. This was their one shot at freedom.

Hassan swallowed hard, the weight of the decision settling in his gut. *Survive. That's the only thing that matters now.*

The men gathered their gear in silence, their movements swift and precise. No one spoke a word, understanding that in moments like these, silence was their best weapon. The sky above them was darkening quickly as the last rays of sunlight bled into the horizon. The city, once full of life, had become a graveyard of broken promises.

"*Stay close,*" Musa whispered, his eyes flicking to each of them in turn. "*We move fast. We don't fire unless we have to.*"

They threaded their way through the maze of ruined buildings, their boots scraping against the rubble. Hassan's mind raced. Every step was a risk, every corner could lead to certain death. His side burned with each breath, but he forced himself to ignore it. There was no room for weakness. Not tonight.

As they approached the edge of the government checkpoint, Hassan felt the familiar knot of fear tight-

en in his chest. The checkpoint was heavily guarded, soldiers moving in and out like clockwork. Through the haze of smoke and dust, Hassan could see their figures, distant shadows, laughing and talking, unaware of the threat moving in on them.

Musa raised his hand, signaling for everyone to halt. The group pressed against the wall of a nearby building, their bodies hidden in the darkness, waiting for the right moment.

"*We wait for my signal,*" Musa murmured. His voice was barely audible, but everyone heard it. The tension hung in the air like a thick fog. Each heartbeat was a countdown to what could be the end.

The first minute passed in silence. Then two. Hassan could hear the rustle of clothing, the sharp intake of breath from his comrades, each man on edge, every sense straining to pick up the slightest sound.

Suddenly, the eerie calm was shattered by a shout from behind them. "*Intruders!*"

Hassan's heart leapt into his throat.

The trap had been sprung.

In an instant, gunfire erupted, and Hassan's body

moved on instinct. He hit the ground, rolling behind a pile of rubble, his rifle already raised, finger on the trigger. The sharp cracks of automatic weapons filled the air, cutting through the night with deadly precision.

"Scatter!" Musa barked, his voice cutting through the chaos. *"Get to the truck!"*

Without thinking, Hassan surged to his feet, his legs carrying him through the gunfire, heart pounding. His boots scraped against the gravel as he sprinted toward the truck parked a hundred yards away. His eyes never left the target, the only thing standing between him and survival.

But the soldiers were everywhere. Hassan's ears rang with the sound of bullets striking the ground around him. A bullet grazed his side, the searing pain making him stumble. Blood began to pour from the wound, but he didn't stop.

He couldn't stop.

"Go! Now!" Hassan shouted, barely able to hear his own voice over the noise of the battlefield.

He reached the truck just as the engine roared to life. His hands grasped the sides, pulling himself into

the back of the vehicle, his blood staining the metal as he gripped the edge. The truck lurched forward, its tires screeching against the cracked pavement.

The streets of Mogadishu blurred around them, the buildings flickering past like ghosts. Hassan's eyes burned with the effort of keeping them open, the pain in his side almost unbearable. But there was no time to dwell on it. Not yet.

The chaos was far from over. The sound of gunfire, of shouting, of death, it all followed them as they sped through the city. Hassan could hear the crackle of radios, the voices of soldiers shouting commands, but it was all distant now. The truck carried them through the heart of the city, toward a fleeting hope, toward survival.

But there was something in the air, something that made the blood in Hassan's veins run cold.

The streets weren't empty. The city was far from abandoned.

And as the truck sped into the dark, Hassan couldn't shake the feeling that they were being hunted.

* * * * * * * * * *

Minutes passed, or was it hours? Hassan couldn't tell. His mind was foggy, his side burning with each bump in the road. His fingers clenched around the edge of the truck, but he never looked back. He had to focus on the road ahead, the darkness that swallowed everything in its path.

"Are we safe?" Ahmed, one of the younger rebels, asked, his voice trembling. His eyes were wide, fear etched into his features.

"*We're not safe anywhere,*" Musa said, his voice low but steady. *"But we have a chance.*"

Hassan didn't speak. He knew what Musa meant. The truck was their only hope of getting out of the city alive, but they were far from safe. The government forces were relentless, their numbers overwhelming. And even if they broke through, even if they managed to make it out alive, what would they find beyond the city? Would there be another battle waiting for them? Another massacre?

There was no easy answer, only the raw, bitter truth.

The truck lurched again, and Hassan's body slammed against the side. He gritted his teeth against

the pain, forcing himself to stay alert. They had to keep moving.

As the truck sped down the ruined streets, Hassan thought about what Musa had said. This was their chance. It might be their only chance.

But the relentless tide of war wasn't done with them yet.

And Hassan would fight, *for survival, for freedom, for a future that seemed more like a dream than a reality.*

Chapter 3
The brink

The truck's engine rumbled, struggling to keep its rhythm against the ever-present threat of the city collapsing around them. Hassan gritted his teeth as the jolts of the rough road sent waves of pain shooting through his side, but he didn't flinch. There was no room for weakness. Not now. Not when they were this close.

Mogadishu had become a hellscape, ruins piled high, smoke rising like dark banners over the city's bones. Every turn brought another blast of heat, a reminder of how deeply the conflict had dug into the heart of the city. Gunfire echoed in the distance, mixed with the crash of distant explosions and the rumble of military vehicles.

Hassan's eyes were fixed on the horizon, where the skyline of crumbling buildings seemed to melt into the fiery orange sky. Above, the faint drone of government helicopters swept like hawks, circling the battlefield. *They controlled everything now,* Hassan thought. *The streets, the sky, the future.*

Musa's voice cut through the tension, low but firm. "We can't keep running."

The older man's fingers gripped the wheel, his knuckles white with the strain. His face was drawn tight, lines carved deep from too many battles. Yet there was something in his eyes, something that never seemed to fade. It was the spark of resolve, the refusal to bend. "We need to take a stand. This is it."

Hassan didn't look at him. Instead, he stared ahead, watching the ruins streak by in a blur of dust and death. The sound of their truck's engine was drowned out by the distant rumblings of explosions and gunfire. The government forces were closing in, pushing relentlessly from all sides, and it was impossible to ignore the fact that this could be their final ride.

But as the words sank in, something stirred deep within Hassan. The moment was coming, the mo-

ment when he would either fade into the chaos or stand tall and face what had already been written.

"*There's no more running*." Hassan spoke quietly, his voice cutting through the roar of the engine.

He felt the words settle around him like a cloak, heavy with the weight of inevitability. His heart pounded in his chest, but it wasn't fear that made him tense. It was something else, something that rose up from the pit of his stomach and spread through his veins like wildfire.

Musa turned sharply, glancing at Hassan for the first time since they had started their journey. His expression softened, but only for a moment. It was the kind of look a man gives a son before sending him into the unknown.

"Are you ready?" Musa asked.

The question hung in the air between them, a loaded question that neither could avoid. Ready to die, ready to face the enemy, ready to make a stand when every instinct screamed to flee. Hassan didn't answer immediately, but his fingers tightened around his rifle, his grip steady despite the pain in his side.

"*We have no choice.*" The words were in his mind, but his lips didn't form them. He didn't need to say it. Musa already knew.

The truck jolted again, the tires grinding against the cracked asphalt as they swerved around an overturned car. Hassan could hear the faint hum of the government forces' engines in the distance. Closer now. Too close.

The road ahead split into two directions: one leading toward the heart of the city, where government soldiers had set up camp, and another toward the outskirts, where the last of the rebel strongholds clung desperately to life.

Hassan could see them, government trucks, armored vehicles, soldiers marching through the streets like they owned them. The air was thick with the hum of military power, the certainty that they were already on top of the city. It was only a matter of time before they reached the last pocket of resistance. And Hassan, with his bullet wound and his broken resolve, was running out of time.

"We're heading straight for them," Musa said, his voice low. "There's no turning back."

Hassan didn't argue. He only nodded and turned his attention to the streets ahead. The decision had been made.

In the back of the truck, the other men were preparing for the inevitable. Ahmed, the youngest of them, was checking his rifle nervously, his hands trembling slightly. His face was pale, the weight of the situation pressing down on him. Hassan could see it in the boy's eyes: fear, uncertainty, but also a spark of something else.

Survival.

"Everyone, stay sharp," Musa said as he slowed the truck, the engines sputtering briefly before roaring back to life. He glanced in the rearview mirror, checking for the faint shadow of pursuit. The government forces were relentless, but Musa had been in the fight long enough to know they could still get the drop on them if they moved fast enough.

"Get ready," Musa muttered, his eyes focused on the street ahead. "We make a stand here."

The truck skidded to a halt just beyond a large, crumbling building, the wheels screeching as they slid sideways, halting within range of the military outposts on the other side of the street.

It was a perfect kill zone.

Hassan's breath came in shallow gasps as he jumped out of the truck, his rifle gripped tightly in his hands. The men followed quickly, taking cover behind the scattered debris. They were outnumbered, outgunned, and surrounded. But there was nowhere to run now.

A voice shouted in the distance. Hassan tensed, his heart racing. The government soldiers were closing in.

"They're coming," Ahmed hissed, his hands shaking as he clutched his rifle.

Hassan nodded. "Stay low. Wait for the signal."

The first shot rang out, the crack of gunfire cutting through the silence. It was the signal.

Hassan's heart raced as he dropped to the ground, firing back with deadly precision. The rebels were outnumbered, but the advantage was with them. The ruins offered cover, and they knew the city better than the government troops ever could.

Bang!

A soldier dropped to the ground, his rifle clattering against the broken pavement.

Bang!

Another. Hassan's breath quickened, adrenaline surging through his veins. But he couldn't relax. There were still more, so many more. The sound of military trucks and armored vehicles grew louder, reverberating in his chest.

Suddenly, a grenade exploded nearby, sending a wave of heat and debris flying through the air. Hassan ducked instinctively, the blast knocking him off his feet. His head hit the ground hard, and for a moment, he couldn't breathe.

Then the world came back into focus. The battle was still raging around him. The air was thick with the stench of gunpowder and sweat. Hassan forced himself to his feet, blood running down his side from the wound.

"Get up, damn it!" Musa shouted, his voice cutting through the chaos. "Keep fighting!"

Hassan's legs shook, but he didn't hesitate. He pushed forward, firing into the chaos, each shot a si-

lent prayer for survival. The world blurred in a haze of noise, dust, and smoke.

The government forces were closing in. It wouldn't be long before they were surrounded, their positions compromised. But they couldn't afford to retreat, couldn't afford to stop fighting. Not when they were this close.

This was it. The moment when survival, or death, would be decided.

And Hassan, standing in the middle of it all, knew only one thing, he would fight until the last breath.

Chapter 4
The final stand

The city was a battlefield. No more was it a place of memories or dreams; it was just death, fire, and the silence that followed. Every corner was a danger, every alley a potential grave. And Hassan knew this was it, the last chance to hold what little was left.

The government forces had tightened their grip on the northern sector, and now, in the grim aftermath of the day's chaos, they had the rebels cornered. It was a perfect trap, a killing zone where every move could be their last. Hassan glanced around at his comrades, each one a silhouette framed by the distant glow of burning buildings, their faces grim but determined. They were out of time.

Musa was nearby, barking orders, his voice hoarse but unyielding. “Hold the line!” he shouted, his figure moving like a shadow through the smoke. Hassan had always respected the older man, his wisdom, his quiet leadership. But now, with the end drawing near, there was no room for fear. Only survival.

A sudden explosion shook the ground beneath them, sending dust and debris spiraling into the air. Hassan’s body instinctively went low as he crouched behind the ruined wall, his rifle at the ready. His heartbeat was a hammer in his chest, the adrenaline coursing through his veins. He could hear the distant hum of enemy vehicles and the barking of soldiers. The government’s final assault had begun.

“Watch your backs!” Musa’s voice rang out through the smoke as another rocket screamed overhead, slamming into a nearby building and collapsing it into a cloud of dust.

Hassan’s eyes narrowed. There was no retreat now. No more running. The government forces were too close, and their strategy was simple, overwhelm with sheer numbers and firepower.

His fingers tightened around his rifle. The barrel felt cool and familiar, almost comforting amidst the

chaos. *Focus, Hassan. Stay sharp,* he thought, pushing the fear deep into the pit of his stomach.

He poked his head above the ruins, scanning the horizon. The first wave of soldiers emerged from the fog of war, well-equipped, disciplined, and relentless. They moved in perfect formation, a wave of metal and uniform, their rifles raised and aimed. Hassan didn't hesitate. He fired first.

A soldier dropped, crumpling to the ground like a rag doll. Hassan quickly adjusted his aim, lining up another shot. The rifle bucked in his hands, and another soldier went down. His heart was racing now, but his hands never faltered. The chaos around him was deafening, but there was clarity in his mind.

"Get down!" someone shouted as a burst of gunfire cut through the air, missing Hassan by inches.

Hassan ducked instinctively, his body pressed tight against the stone wall. He could hear the whistling of bullets overhead. Each one was a reminder that the world outside this moment was nothing but violence, but inside, he could control the fight.

The battle unfolded like a symphony of destruction. Gunfire, explosions, the screams of the wound-

ed, it was impossible to tell what was coming next, but Hassan was no stranger to this. He had fought in the streets, the alleys, everywhere the government thought they could push them back. He knew the streets better than the enemy did. But now, it was different. This wasn't a skirmish. This was the final act.

Suddenly, a loud crack echoed in the air, followed by a sickening thud. Hassan's stomach dropped. He turned just in time to see Musa collapse to the ground, his chest a gory mess from a sniper's bullet.

"Musa!" Hassan shouted, rushing to his side, his heart skipping a beat.

But there was no response. Musa's eyes stared blankly ahead, his hand still gripping the rifle, but it was useless now. Hassan's mind raced as he knelt beside him. His oldest ally, his mentor, was gone. The battlefield had claimed him.

Damn it, Hassan thought, gritting his teeth. *We can't lose now. Not like this.*

He heard the enemy soldiers advancing. They were pushing closer, the sound of boots thundering against the pavement. Hassan took a deep breath, his heart pounding, as he rose to his feet, his rifle aimed. He wouldn't let Musa die in vain.

"Fight, goddamn it!" he shouted to the others. His voice cut through the smoke like a blade, a rallying cry. He wasn't just fighting for survival anymore. He was fighting for everything they had lost. For every soul who had fallen.

The rebels opened fire, and the battle intensified. Hassan shot without thinking, moving instinctively, his body following the rhythm of war. He saw his comrades fall, one by one, their bodies dropping as the enemy closed in. Each time a rebel went down, Hassan's heart shattered a little more, but his resolve only grew stronger.

I will not die here. Not today.

The government forces were everywhere now. The street was crawling with soldiers, their rifles raised, their faces determined. Hassan was running out of ammo, his rifle now empty. He dropped it, pulled his knife, and charged forward, the blade flashing in the dim light as he took down one soldier, then another. He was outnumbered, surrounded, but there was no turning back.

"Take them down!" he shouted, his voice hoarse from the smoke and the dust. "For our fallen brothers!"

The soldiers were close now, too close. Hassan could hear their footsteps, their low murmurs. They were hunting him, trying to corner him. But Hassan didn't fear death. Not anymore.

He sprinted toward the group of enemy soldiers, his movements erratic and desperate. They didn't expect it, and for a moment, there was a flash of surprise in their eyes as he charged. Hassan tackled one of them to the ground, the soldier's rifle falling from his hands. The fight was brutal, desperate. Hassan's knife slashed through the air, cutting through flesh and bone. He was unstoppable, driven by the loss of his comrades, by the need for revenge, for justice.

But as the last soldier fell to the ground, Hassan's body was drained, his strength gone. The battlefield was silent now, the dust settling in the air like a thick fog. The smell of blood and gunpowder hung in the air, heavy and suffocating.

Hassan collapsed to the ground, his chest heaving, his bloodied hands gripping the dirt. There was no one left to fight. No one left to die. The war, for him, was over.

In the distance, the sound of reinforcements could be heard. Hassan's heart raced as he forced himself to

look up. The government had lost this battle, but the war was far from over.

For Musa. For all of them, Hassan thought as his vision blurred, the sounds of the battlefield fading into the background.

He couldn't fight anymore.

His final breath was a whisper, carried away on the winds of a city that had already given everything it had to give.

For the fallen.

And with that, Hassan, the boy soldier of Mogadishu, was gone.

The End

Mogadishu's dust

Lucas Durand

Ovi eBook Publishing 2026

Ovi magazine
Design: Thanos

An Ovi Magazine Books Publication
© 2026 Ovi Project Publication - All material is copyright of the Ovi magazine & the writer

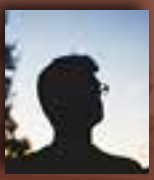
Ovi books are available in Ovi magazine pages and they are for free.
If somebody tries to sell you an Ovi book please contact us immediately.

For details, contact: ovimagazine@yahoo.com

No part of this publication may be reproduced, printed or digital,
altered or selectively extracted by any means
(electronic, mechanical, print,, recording or otherwise)
without the prior written permission of the author or the publisher of this book.

Mogadishu's dust

The streets were alive with death, the city they once called home reduced to a battle zone.



Lucas Durand is a history enthusiast whose passion for the past fuels his work as a columnist and author. He delves into the rich tapestry of human events, exploring the triumphs and tragedies that have shaped our world. Lucas concentrates in the WWI era and loves bringing history and events vividly to life.

LUCAS DURAND